

**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 7, 8, 14-16 and 21-23 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 8, 15 and 16 are amended to even further distinguish over the cited references. Claims 1, 8, 15 and 16 are amended to recite features supported, for example, in Figs. 2 and 3 and page 13, line 16 to page 15, line 25 of the specification and to incorporate features of original claims 2, 3, 9, 10, 17 and 18. New claims 22-23 are supported in the original specification at, for example, page 17, lines 15-24, page 18, line 12- page 19, line 16 and page 24, line 16- page 26, line 2. Thus, no new matter is added. Reconsideration of the application based on the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiners Pham and Truong in the June 6, 2007 personal interview. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

The Office Action (1) rejects claims 1, 4-6, 16, 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hattori, U.S. Patent No. 5,761,496 in view of Kalogeraki et al. (Kalogeraki), U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0204497; (2) rejects claims 7, 15 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hattori in view of Kalogeraki, and further in view of Liddy et al. (Liddy), U.S. Patent No. 6,026,388; (3) rejects claims 8 and 11-13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hattori in view of Kalogeraki, and further in view of the Background of the Application (Background); and (4) rejects claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hattori in view of Kalogeraki, Background and Liddy. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

With respect to (1) - (4), the combination of applied references fails to disclose that the claimed service is at least one of a print service and a scan service, as recited in independent claims 1, 15 and 16, and that the claimed service attribute information is information of at least one of a print service and a scan service provided by the server, as recited in independent claim 8.

The Office Action acknowledges that Hattori does not disclose a service, but asserts that Kalogeraki discloses services that could be used in the system of Hattori. Kalogeraki merely discloses a network search system that searches for electronic services over the Internet (e.g., "E-services") (see paragraphs [0002], [0006] and [0010]). However, Kalogeraki fails to disclose a service that is at least one of a print service and a scan service. Liddy fails to overcome the deficiencies of Hattori and Kalogeraki. Thus, claims 1, 8, 15 and 16 are patentable over the combination of cited references for at least these reasons.

Further, the combination of references fails to disclose or suggest that the retrieval unit changes the retrieval condition so as to be wider when it is judged that a number of one or more services included in the result of the first retrieval has not reached a lower limit number set as the judgment criteria, and performs the second retrieval with respect to a new retrieval range excluding a range for which the first retrieval is performed, as now recited in independent claims 1, 8 and 16.

Hattori discloses a retrieval expression generation process performed by the retrieval management section 2220 in which the retrieval parameter K is modified if the estimated number of retrieval count does not fall between the specific minimum retrieval count and the specified maximum retrieval (step 2560 or step 2570) (see col. 23, lines 8-12 and 23-29). Hattori further discloses that as the value of the retrieval parameter K becomes closer to 1, the retrieval condition becomes more restrictive and the number of data items retrieved from the database decreases. Thus, if the estimated retrieval count is greater than the maximum retrieval count in step 2570, the minimum value of the retrieval parameter is changed from 0 to 0.5 and the value of the retrieval parameter K is changed from 0.5 to 0.75 (see col. 24, lines 44-54). That is, the range of 0-0.5 and the range of 0-0.75 include the ranges used in the first retrieval process, so that the retrieval condition is narrower, i.e., making the number of data items retrieved from the database decrease. However, independent claims 1, 8 and 16 recite

that the second retrieval with respect to a new retrieval range excludes a range for which the first retrieval was performed, contrary to the teaching of Hattori with respect to this condition. Kalogeraki and Liddy fail to overcome the deficiencies of Hattori. Thus, claims 1, 8 and 16 also are patentable over the combination of cited references for these reasons.

Further, because claims 7, 14 and 21-27 incorporate the features of claims 1, 8 and 16, these claims also are patentable over the combination of cited references.

With further respect to (2), the combination of Hattori, Kalogeraki and Liddy fails to disclose or suggest that rearranging is executed when the plurality of items of service information exceeds a number set in advance, as recited in independent claim 15. The Office Action acknowledges that Hattori and Kalogeraki do not disclose these features, but asserts that the features are disclosed by Liddy. Liddy discloses that matching documents to a query organizes documents by matching scores in a ranked list, and that the total number of presented documents can be selected by the user (see col. 24, lines 53-55). Based on this passage, the Office Action asserts that Liddy "essentially suggests" organizing the documents when a total number of documents to be presented is received by a user. However, there is no evidence or support anywhere in Liddy that any such organization is executed when the plurality of items of service information exceeds a number set in advance, as recited in claim 15. Instead, the Office Action relies on impermissible hindsight using knowledge gleaned only from Applicants' disclosure (see MPEP §2145(X)(A)). Thus, claim 15 is patentable for this additional reason.

Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn.

The references also fail to disclose the combination of features recited in independent claim 22 and its dependent claim 23.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of all pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:

Request for Continued Examination  
Amendment Transmittal

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